THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) to (c) Some of the Manufacturers' Associations have conveyed their concerns on the possible negative impact of the Free Agreements (FTAs) between India, ASEAN and Gulf Cooperation Council. While finalising the FTAs, due regard is given to the genuine concerns of the domestic industry.

Import of Agro Products

187. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of agro products allowed for import during the last three years;

(b) the number of agro products permitted for export and the foreign exchange earned during the above period;

(c) whether the export earning from some agro products have been reduced during the said period;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(e) the steps taken to push up export of agro products/coffee; and

(f) the number of export sectors working in the country at present, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) A total of 24 agri and allied products were imported as well as exported during the last three years *i.e.* 2003-04, 2004-05. and 2005-06 (upto December, 2006)*.

(c) and (d) Export earning from agro products has been increasing during the above mentioned three years and was to tune of 5223.85, 5766.48 and 4914 US$ million (upto December, 2006)*

(e) Encouraging export is a continuous process. The Government is taking steps to encourage export of agro products through measures and incentives under Plan schemes of the Commodity Boards etc. Systematic improvements to facilitate export is an ongoing process and whenever required, the Government reviews these procedures, with a view to simplify the same. In order to boost Indian coffee exports as well as to maximize export earnings, the Coffee Board initiated the following key initiatives under its Market Development Scheme in the X Plan like Carrying out

* Provisional (Source DGCI & S)

major communication initiatives were carried out in key overseas markets, participated in overseas trade fairs, organized buyer-seller meets and cupping sessions, organized annual cupping competition - 'Flavour of India'

Further, in order to make Indian Coffee exports more competitive, the Government of India has abolished the cess on coffee produced and exported from India. Import duty on various items of machinery for enhancing the export of value added coffee has been reduced to an all-inclusive rate of 5% upto May 2006.

(f) There are no export sectors existing in the country.

Indo-Pak Trade

188. SHRI DARA SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Pakistan have decided to sort out outstanding trade related issues;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the agreement reached between the two countries;

(c) whether Pakistan has decided to import tea and garments from India;

(d) whether Pakistan has agreed to extend South Asia Free Trade agreements (SAFTA) to become operative from July, 2006; and

(e) if so, what is the quantum of trade between India and Pakistan at present and the extent to which it will be improved further?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. India and Pakistan are in discussions including within the framework of Composite Dialogue to address all issues concerning bilateral trade.

(c) At present the imports into Pakistan from India are restricted to the items in their Positive List. In the present list of 773 items, tea is included and the garments not included. During the 3rd round of India-Pakistan trade talks within the framework of Composite Dialogue held in